

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Claims 11 and 24 are canceled. Claims 12-14, 16-18, 22, 25, 27, 29-31 and 33 have been amended to make some previously dependent claims independent and to correct dependency of others to particularly define applicants' invention. Claim 13 has been amended to correct a spelling error.

In the Office Action, at page 5, the Examiner indicates that claims 12-13, 18, 20, 23, 25-26, 31-32 and 34 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claims 12, 14, 16-18, 22, 25, 27, 29-31 and 33 have been so amended. In particular, allowable claim 12 is independent, claims 13-17, 20, 22 and 23 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 12. Allowable claim 18 is independent. Claim 25 is independent. Claims 26-30, 32-34 are directly or indirectly dependent upon claim 25. Allowable claim 31 is independent. As such all of these claims 12-18, 20, 22, 23, 25-34 should be allowable.

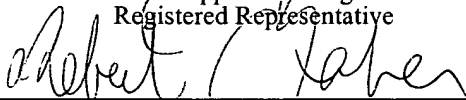
Claims 11, 16-17, 24 and 29-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Seidel (DE 423116). Claims 14-15 and 27-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Seidel and further in view of Umeda (U.S. Patent No. 4,325,451). Claims 22 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Seidel, further in view of Strauss (U.S. Patent No. 1,816,161). Applicants respectfully traverse all of these rejections. The rejected claims have either been canceled, or amended to include or be made dependent upon allowable claims.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and allowance of remaining claims 12-18, 20, 22, 23, 25-34 is respectfully requested.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on March 17, 2004:

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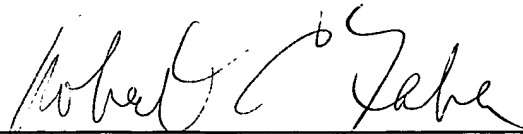


Signature

March 17, 2004

Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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